



October 1, 2005

*Policy Update* highlights the latest research, analysis, and statistics from the Social Security Administration's Office of Policy. It appears quarterly on the Web (<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy>) and in each issue of the *Social Security Bulletin*. It includes summaries of all recent products and identifies work done by outside researchers funded through a cooperative agreement with SSA. Information about the availability of the publications is given in each section.

## Publications

Documents from the Office of Policy are available at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy>. For information about the availability of printed copies, please e-mail [op.publications@ssa.gov](mailto:op.publications@ssa.gov), call 202-358-6274, or fax 202-358-6192.

### *International Programs*

#### ***Social Security Programs Throughout the World: Africa, 2005***

(released September 2005)

This publication provides a cross-national comparison of the social security systems. It summarizes the five main social insurance programs: old age, disability, and survivors; sickness and maternity; work injury; unemployment; and family allowances. It is published in four regional volumes (Europe, Asia and the Pacific, Africa, and the Americas), one every 6 months.

Online: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/progdesc/ssptw/2004-2005/africa/index.html>

### *Reform of Social Security*

#### ***The Distributional Consequences of a "No-Action" Scenario: Updated Results***

Policy Brief No. 2005-01 (released July 2005)

Under the Social Security program, benefits are paid to retired workers, survivors, and disabled persons out of two trust funds—the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance

and the Disability Insurance (OASDI) Trust Funds. In their 2005 report, the Social Security Trustees projected that the combined OASDI trust funds would be exhausted in 2041. Because the trust funds are used to pay benefits, retirement benefits would have to be reduced somewhat in 2041 and more drastically in 2042.

If no action were taken to strengthen Social Security, the benefit reductions necessitated by the exhaustion of the trust funds would double the poverty rate of Social Security beneficiaries aged 64–78 in 2042, from 1.5 percent to 3.3 percent. However, this increased poverty rate would still be lower than the current poverty rate for beneficiaries aged 62–76, which is 4.6 percent. In addition, the trust funds' exhaustion could lead to lower returns on payroll taxes using traditional "money's-worth" measures.

Online: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/policybriefs/pb2005-01.html>

### *Retirement*

#### ***OASDI Beneficiaries by State and County, 2004*** (released July 2005)

This annual publication provides data on the Social Security population at the local level. It presents basic program data by type of benefit (retirement, survivors, and disability) and category of beneficiary (retired and disabled workers, wives and husbands, widows and widowers, and children).

Online: [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/oasdi\\_sc/2004/index.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/oasdi_sc/2004/index.html)

#### ***OASDI Beneficiaries by State and ZIP Code, 2003*** (released July 2005)

This annual publication focuses on the Social Security beneficiary population at the ZIP Code level. It presents basic program data on the number and type of beneficiaries and the amount of benefits paid in each state, Social Security Administration field office, and ZIP Code. It also shows the number of beneficiaries aged 65 or older.

Online: [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/oasdi\\_zip/2003/index.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/oasdi_zip/2003/index.html)

## ***Social Security Programs***

---

### ***Fast Facts & Figures About Social Security, 2005***

(released September 2005)

This annual booklet highlights data on the most important aspects of the Social Security and Supplemental Security Income programs—the people they serve and the benefits they provide.

Online: [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/chartbooks/fast\\_facts/2005/index.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/chartbooks/fast_facts/2005/index.html)

### ***Annual Statistical Supplement, 2004***

(released August 2005)

The *Supplement* includes more than 250 statistical tables that provide comprehensive data on Social Security and Supplemental Security Income. The data cover such aspects of the programs as beneficiary counts, amounts of benefits, and the status of the trust funds. Most of the data are derived from SSA's administrative records. The tables also contain data on related social insurance and welfare programs. Narrative sections describe the programs' legislative history and program rules.

Online: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2004/index.html>

## ***Supplemental Security Income***

---

### ***SSI Annual Statistical Report, 2004***

(released September 2005)

This annual report describes the SSI program and the people who receive benefits from it. The tables present data on such topics as recipient characteristics, state-administered supplements, disability and work incentives, applications, awards, and denials.

Online: [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/ssi\\_asr/2004/index.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/ssi_asr/2004/index.html)

### ***State Assistance Programs for SSI Recipients, January 2005***

(released September 2005)

This annual publication presents data on selected characteristics of mandatory and optional state assistance programs for SSI recipients. It focuses on eligibility provisions and the maximum levels of assistance for individuals and couples who receive supplementary payments.

Online: [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/progdesc/ssi\\_st\\_asst/2005/index.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/progdesc/ssi_st_asst/2005/index.html)

### ***SSI Disabled Recipients Who Work, 2004***

(released July 2005)

This report presents data on all SSI disabled recipients who work, Section 1619 participants, and recipients who benefit from other work incentive programs.

Online: [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/ssi\\_workers/2004/index.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/ssi_workers/2004/index.html)

### ***Children Receiving SSI, 2004***

(released July 2005)

The tables in this report provide a snapshot of selected program and demographic characteristics of children who receive Supplemental Security Income.

Online: [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/ssi\\_children/2004/index.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/ssi_children/2004/index.html)

## ***Other***

---

### ***Social Security Bulletin, Vol. 66 No. 1***

(released September 2005)

Includes articles on:

- Social Security: A Program and Policy History
- Literature Review of Long-Term Mortality Projections
- Individual Accounts in Other Countries
- Lifetime Earnings, Social Security Benefits, and the Adequacy of Retirement Wealth Accumulation
- Medicare Gaps and Widow Poverty

Online: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/policy/docs/ssb/v66n1/index.html>

## **Papers from the Retirement Research Consortium**

The Retirement Research Consortium comprises three multidisciplinary centers that are funded through a cooperative agreement with the Social Security Administration. The centers are located at Boston College, the University of Michigan, and the National Bureau of Economic Research. These centers provide research and policy analysis to inform decisionmakers about issues critical to Social Security's retirement program.

## ***Boston College***

---

The following papers are available on the Center for Retirement Research Web site (<http://www.bc.edu/crr>) or by e-mail from [crr@bc.edu](mailto:crr@bc.edu).

### ***Top Ten Myths of Social Security Reform***

Jeffrey R. Brown, Kevin A. Hassett, and Kent Smetters  
*BCCRR Working Paper No. 2005-11 (September 2005)*

### ***How Much is the Working-Age Population Saving?***

Alicia H. Munnell, Francesca Golub-Sass, and Andrew Varani

*BCCRR Working Paper No. 2005-12 (September 2005)*

### ***What Replacement Rates Do Households Actually Experience in Retirement?***

Alicia H. Munnell and Mauricio Soto

*BCCRR Working Paper No. 2005-10 (August 2005)*

## ***University of Michigan***

---

Summaries of the projects on which the following papers are based are available on the Retirement Research Center Web site ([http://www.mrrc.isr.umich.edu/content.cfm?section=research&content=research\\_projects](http://www.mrrc.isr.umich.edu/content.cfm?section=research&content=research_projects)). The papers can be requested by e-mail from [mrrc@isr.umich.edu](mailto:mrrc@isr.umich.edu).

### ***Will China Eat Our Lunch or Take Us to Dinner? Simulating the Transition Paths of the U.S., E.U., Japan, and China***

Hans Fehr, Sabine Jokisch, and Laurence J. Kotlikoff  
*MRRC Working Paper No. 2005-102 (September 2005)*

### ***Estimating Life-Cycle Effects of Subjective Survival Probabilities in the Health and Retirement Study***

Michael Perry

*MRRC Working Paper No. 2005-103 (September 2005)*

### ***Why Not Retire? The Time and Timing Costs of Market Work***

Daniel S. Hamermesh

*MRRC Working Paper No. 2005-104 (September 2005)*

## ***National Bureau of Economic Research***

---

The following papers are available on the Retirement Research Center Web site (<http://www.nber.org/programs/ag/rrc/rrchome.html>) or by online request (<http://www.nber.org/contact>).

### ***Political Risk versus Market Risk in Social Security***

John Shoven and Sita Slavov

*Paper No. NB05-02 (July 2005)*

### ***\$100 Bills on the Sidewalk: Suboptimal Saving in 401(k) Plans***

James J. Choi, David Laibson, and Brigitte C. Madrian

*Paper No. NB04-08 (July 2005)*

## ***RRC Conference Proceedings***

---

On August 11–12, 2005, the Office of Policy sponsored the 7th Annual Conference of the Retirement Research Consortium. The conference featured panel presentations that highlighted current RRC research related to retirement income security, consumption and economic well-being in retirement, the effects of wealth and health shocks, patterns on aging and labor supply, and investment behavior and personal accounts. Conference proceedings are available at <http://www.bc.edu/centers/crr/seventh annual.shtml>.

### **Social Security Administration**

Office of Policy

Office of Research, Evaluation, and Statistics

500 E Street, SW, 8th Floor

Washington, DC 20254

SSA Publication No. 13-11701